NCA
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AMERICAN "REFUSENIKS"

ANNCR:

AMERICAN SCIENTISTS HAVE BEEN URGED TO REFUSE TO COOPERATE WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS WHICH UNFAIRLY INTERFERE WITH THE FREE PURSUIT OF SCIENCE. VOA SCIENCE EDITOR LASZLO DOSA HAS DETAILS.

VOICE:

"REFUSENIK" IS THE WORD OCCASIONALLY USED IN THE AMERICAN PRESS TO REFER TO SOVIET JEWS WHO HAVE BEEN REFUSED PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE TO ISRAEL. THE FEDERATION OF AMERICAN SCIENTISTS HAS BORROWED THE TERM TO REFER TO AMERICAN SCIENTISTS WHO ARE WILLING TO STAND UP IN SUPPORT OF THEIR COLLEAGUES ABROAD.

THE FEDERATION WHICH HAS ALWAYS BEEN A STRONG SUPPORTER OF INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION, IS GREATLY CONCERNED WITH THE FATE OF NOT "JUST THE JEWISH REFUSENIKS, AND NOT JUST THE EMBATTLED SOVIET SCIENTISTS IN GENERAL, BUT ALL SCIENTISTS ABROAD, SUFFERING ANY PROBLEM THAT IS UNFAIRLY INTERFERING WITH THEIR PURSUIT OF SCIENCE." IN ITS SEARCH FOR THE MOST SUCCESSFUL METHOD TO HELP FOREIGN SCIENTISTS, THE FEDERATION WANTED TO ACT IN THE CONTEXT OF A GENERAL DESIRE TO INCREASE SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE, TO IMPROVE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, AND TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF PEACE.

THE SOLUTION TO THIS PROBLEM HAS BEEN TO CALL ON AMERICAN SCIENTISTS TO "ADOPT" COLLEAGUES ABROAD WHO NEED AND DESERVE HELP IN PROTECTING THEIR CAREERS AGAINST IMPROPER GOVERNMENTAL ACTION. THE AMERICAN SCIENTIST WOULD THEN ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT IS QUESTION THAT HE, AS AN INDIVIDUAL, INTENDS TO REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN ONE OR MORE PARTICULAR KINDS OF SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE OR COOPERATION UNTIL THE SPECIFIED INJUSTICE IS CORRECTED.

THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS THE "AMERICAN REFUSENIK" MAY PROCEED. FOR EXAMPLE, HE MIGHT QUIETLY ADVISE A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT THAT HE WAS REFUSING TO OPEN HIS LABORATORY TO VISITORS FROM THAT COUNTRY. OR HE MIGHT PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE THAT HE WILL NOT PARTICIPATE IN AN EXCHANGE PROGRAM WITH THAT COUNTRY UNTIL HIS ADOPTED COLLEAGUE IS RELEASED FROM PRISON, OR PERMITTED TO ATTEND A FOREIGN CONFERENCE.

THE STATEMENT OF THE FEDERATION OF AMERICAN SCIENTISTS POINTS OUT THAT THE "AMERICAN REFUSENIKS" CAN SELECT ANY NUMBER OF WAYS TO EXERT THEIR INFLUENCE ON BEHALF OF THEIR PERSECUTED FOREIGN COLLEAGUES. IT IS UP TO THE INDIVIDUAL SCIENTIST TO SEE TO IT THAT "THE PUNISHMENT FITS THE CRIME." AND, SINCE ALL SCIENTISTS WILL NOT BE UP IN ARMS WITH REGARD TO ANY PARTICULAR COUNTRY AT ANY PARTICULAR TIME, SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE WITH ALL COUNTRIES CAN GO FORWARD UNDER THIS SYSTEM. MOREOVER, THIS METHOD WOULD APPLY TO ALL SCIENTISTS EVERYWHERE WHO ARE IN NEED OF OUTSIDE HELP, NOT ONLY TO SOVIET SCIENTISTS OR SOVIET REFUSENIKS.

THE FEDERATION OF AMERICAN SCIENTISTS NOTES IN ITS STATEMENT THAT ACCORDING TO A SOVIET K-G-B GENERAL, "SCIENTISTS AND INTELLECTUALS LIKE TO SPEAK, BUT THEY DO NOTHING CONCRETE; THEY MAKE APPEALS TO THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES, BUT LATER SAY THAT THE PROTESTS AND APPEALS WERE NOT SERIOUS." THE REFUSAL OF INDIVIDUAL AMERICAN SCIENTISTS TO EXTEND THEIR COOPERATION IS LIKELY TO REFUTE THAT STATEMENT.

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